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Recreation Commission Minutes 02/10/2009

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, February 10, 2009.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Jim Robillard, Jen Rothenberg and Don Vitters. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly.

Members of the public included: Cathy Saleh, Henry Brush, Richard Stavros and members of the Belmont Crew Club.

Approval of Minutes

The Park and Recreation Commission reviewed the minutes of January 13, 2009. Mr. Vitters amended the minutes for a grammatical error. Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve as amended, seconded by Mr. Vitters. Motion was approved 4-0.

Comfort Facilities in Parks Report/Proposal

Mr. Connelly reviewed the previous meetings of the subcommittee stating that the group recently met with Friends of Parks to review the concept. Mr. Connelly introduced Ms. Saleh and Mr. Brush to review the draft proposal. Ms. Saleh reviewed the current proposal with the commission highlighting their rationale, other alternatives, aesthetics/screening, maintenance, vandalism, insurance and location. Ms. Saleh discussed the current fee proposal and explained that it included a charge of \$5 for each program participant/per organization. Ms. Saleh stated that the Arlington Soccer Club (ASC) is willing to take the lead on the project. Ms. Saleh stated that she felt it was important that each organization buy into the program and feel vested.

Mr. Robillard asked about the insurance aspect of the facilities. Ms. Saleh stated that for an additional \$10 a month, per unit, the Town would be fully covered for any damaged or vandalized units. Mr. Vitters asked if the units could be anchored/secured in some way. Ms. Saleh indicated that they could be. Mr. Brush stated that ASC is willing to support a three month trial in 6-parks this spring.

The Commission discussed the possible locations and the need for a town wide public information session to discuss proper placement.

Mr. Connelly stated that if the Town were to sign the contract and pay the bill there would be significant savings for the program. Mr. Connelly stated that he did have preliminary discussions with the Town Manager. Mr. Connelly commented that by default the Town would be receiving the maintenance and vandalism calls for the units.

Ms. Mayer asked if the subcommittee looked at opening the sport center at Summer Street field and at the Spy Pond clubhouse at Hornblower Field. Ms. Rothenberg stated that they had not but would try to work on the cost numbers before the March meeting. Ms. Mayer indicated that there would be the benefit of opening the concession stand at the rink to potentially offset some of the cost.

Ms. Mayer asked Mr. Connelly to talk to the Planning Department to see if there were any zoning issues with the placement of the units in our parks and open spaces including any issues concerning the advertisements on the units.

The Commission discussed the process from this point. Mr. Connelly stated that the group would be presenting to the Field Users on February 23rd, would hold a public meeting and would then report back to the Commission at a future meeting. The Commission would then vote on the proposal making a formal recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. The Commission discussed the importance of advertising the public input session due to the inability to send abutter notifications to all the potential areas. Mr. Connelly will contact the advocate about having the notice posted in the paper.

Ms. Saleh and the Commission discussed their preliminary support.

Rink and Recreation Update

Rowing Club Proposal - Mr. Connelly introduced the proposal for the Commission. Mr. Connelly introduced Mr. Richard Stavros to review the proposal. Mr. Stavros stated his coaching and programmatic qualifications and reviewed his proposal to utilize Spy Pond for an Arlington/Belmont Rowing program.

Mr. Stavros stated that the proposal would include an interscholastic program in the spring and fall and a recreational program in the summer. Mr. Connelly asked if anyone from the high school has been contacted. Mr. Savros indicated that he had in the past but not recently. Mr. Stavros emphasized that this program would not cost the high school or Town any money and that the program would be revenue neutral.

Ms. Mayer asked the rowing club where they had been rowing. The Commission discussed the reasons for the club looking for a new home.

Mr. Stavros reviewed the four items needed to start a program: secure fence for equipment storage, construction trailer, portable toilet, a 50' dock parallel to the shoreline. The Commissin explained that the dock, trailer and portable toilet may be difficult but the fencing for equipment storage was possible.

Mr. Connelly stated that he had spoken with the Town Counsel and Town Manager about the program and as long as there the Town received the appropriate insurances and waivers it seemed like a plausible program opportunity.

Ms. Mayer also suggested looking into use of the Spy Pond Field clubhouse for changing and restrooms. Mr. Connelly asked that Mr. Stavros talk to the representatives from the high school to solicit support.

Ms. Mayer asked Mr. Connelly to talk to the appropriate channels concerning any zoning issues.

Mr. Vitters motioned to endorse the concept of creating a community-rowing program for the Town with both Town and School representatives to ensure all necessary conditions are approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 4-0.

Ms. Mayer asked Mr. Connelly to solicit input from the Friends of Spy Pond Park.

Arlington Sports Complex Feasibility Study Review

Mr. Vitters excused himself from participating in the discussion.

Mr. Connelly discussed the upcoming public input session. Ms. Mayer and Mr. Connelly reviewed their meeting with the Town Manager. The Commission discussed how to best present at the public input session. Mr. Connelly stated that Sasaki would be presenting the three master plan options for discussion and feedback. Mr. Robillard suggested also discussing wish lists for both inside the facility and within the entire sport complex. The Commission discussed how this input would be invaluable as the process moves forward.

CDBG Request for FY 2010

The Commission discussed the FY2010 CDBG requests. Mr. Connelly shard his recommendations asking for the Commission

assistance in prioritizing the requests. Mr. Connelly reviewed the request including: scholarships/jobs program, Spy Pond Playground, North Union Basketball Court, Hibbert Playground and Fencing for Dog Parks. The Commission modified the budget numbers. Ms Rothenberg motioned to approve the following request in priority order, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0.

Scholarships and Jobs Program - \$18,000
Spy Pond Play ground - \$30,000
North Union Basketball Court - \$59,000
Fencing for Three Dog Parks -\$45,000
Hibbert Street Play ground - \$45,000

Green Dog Warrant Article Review

Ms. Mayer reviewed the draft of the Green Dog Proposal and relevant warrant article. Ms. Mayer asked the fellow Commissioners to review the document at their leisure and send any feedback or questions to either Mr. Connelly or herself. The Commission briefly reviewed the draft hours. Ms. Mayer then reviewed the process from this point forward including meetings with relevant town departments and town meeting members.

Special Events

There are no special requests at this time.

Capital Update

Buzzell Field - Mr. Connelly stated that the playground was completed and that funds were still being held to ensure turf quality.

Thorndike Parking – Mr. Warner is waiting to meet with Mr. O'Brien to discuss the special permit process.

Pheasant Ave. – Mr. Connelly stated that the playground was completed and that funds were still being held to ensure turf quality.

Committee Updates

Comfort Facility and Friends of Parks – Discussed earlier in the meeting

Green Dog Committee – Discussed earlier in the meeting

Correspondence

Pam Callaway – The Commission discussed Ms. Callaway's request for geocaching on park property. The Commission decided that they were unable to formally support this concept at this time.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation